



## U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 2 Citizen Science Program

Protecting Children's Health  
and  
Advancing Environmental Justice



*"...we have 53 industrial plants in our neighborhood, in Tonawanda, New York... we have 53 air polluters within a two-mile radius...we went out and took three-minute grab samples to see what folks were exposed to and what it showed was that there were extremely high levels of benzene in the neighborhood..."*

*Erin Heaney, The Clean Air Coalition of Western NY*

Citizen Science is a vital, fast-growing field in which scientific investigations are conducted by volunteers. Individuals and community groups have long collected data to better understand their local environment and address issues of concern to them. Over the past decade, there has been an explosion of Citizen Science projects as more advanced tools become available and communities become more empowered. These projects have been remarkably successful in expanding scientific knowledge, raising people's awareness of their environment and leveraging change.

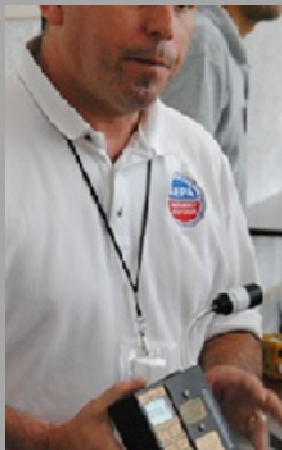
EPA Region 2 is committed to supporting Citizen Science and has developed a Citizen Science Program to increase communication and coordination, and to work together with communities to address our common goals of protecting human health and the environment.

*"...if someone is interested in becoming a Citizen Scientist they need to look around their community...I'm sure within their community or close to their community there is a watershed association or a not-for-profit organization or a Riverkeeper chapter. There are folks out there that are desperate to be working with volunteers that really want to make a difference."*

*Danielle Donkersloot, NJ DEP Volunteer Water Monitoring Program*

### Our Program:

- Hosting an interactive discussion forum to exchange information among citizen scientists;
- Evaluating traditional and innovative sampling and analysis technologies suitable for use by citizen scientists;
- Providing timely and relevant training on various topics;
- Sharing current news on EPA tools, data portals, funding opportunities, seminars and technical assistance opportunities;
- Creating other sharing forums, such as social media platforms, videos and workshops, for citizen scientists.



*"The main goal of the study was to bring exposure to the fact that in the City of Newark, and most urban communities, one in four children is asthmatic...our goal was to monitor the amount of truck traffic that was going through the community to see the levels of PM2.5, the ultra fine particles that impact asthma..."*

*Kim Gaddy, NJ Environmental Federation*

### **Our Accomplishments to Date:**

- Held inaugural Citizen Science workshops in Edison, New Jersey and New York City that brought together over 250 participants from government, non-governmental organizations, academia and community groups interested in advancing the use of citizen science monitoring in their communities;
- Established a one-time competitive grants program that funded six Citizen Science air and water community-led monitoring projects in New York City and the U.S. Virgin Islands;
- Provided funding for 23 Citizen Science air screening projects through the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation;
- Provided funding for the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to work with four communities on the collection of ambient air monitoring data to determine its usefulness in making public policy decisions;
- Held webinar training on MyEnvironment, an interactive tool to identify regulated facilities and existing monitoring data for your locale;
- Held in person training on how to produce credible data in Edison, New Jersey; New York City; and Buffalo, NY; and
- Produced and posted a video on YouTube on citizen science work done in Tonawanda, NY.

*"I think that work is great and I think there is more room for more studies...the fact that real science monitoring is being developed so that citizens can take matters into their own hands, so that they can go and study it and provide that information to institutions or elected officials...I think that is groundbreaking."*

*Kellie Terry-Sepulveda, Bronx Point Community Development Corporation*

### **Contact us and let's discuss our shared mission**

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